

Serial No.: 09/588,443
Attorney Docket No.: E-848

Patent

Amendment To The Specification

Please amend the specification as shown below.

On page 1, in the Cross Reference to Related Applications, please replace the entire section as follows:

91 This application is related to the following co-pending applications filed concurrently herewith and commonly assigned to the assignee of this application: US Patent Application Number ~~aa/aaa,aaa~~ 09/588,853, entitled RECIPIENT CONTROL OVER ASPECTS OF INCOMING MESSAGES (Attorney Docket No. F-126) and US Patent Application Number ~~aa/aaa,aaa~~ 09/588,763, entitled INFORMATION DELIVERY SYSTEM FOR PROVIDING SENDERS WITH A RECIPIENT'S MESSAGING PREFERENCES (Attorney Docket No. F-160), both of which are specifically incorporated herein by reference.

On page 3, beginning on line 26, please replace the last paragraph continuing to page 4 as follows:

92 Referring to Fig. 1, an example of an information system 100 in which the present invention may be incorporated is shown. The information system includes a data center 110 in communication over any suitable communication network 102 (LAN, WAN, telephone line, Internet, etc.) with a plurality of remotely located (geographically dispersed) messaging systems 150. The messaging systems 150 may include any device that is utilized by a sender (not shown) to produce a message (not shown) intended for a recipient (not shown). Examples of messaging systems are: a traditional postage meter 152, such as the Personal Post™ meter; an open system postage meter 154, such as the ClickStamp™ online postage system employing a personal computer 154a and a dot matrix (laser, ink jet, thermal transfer, etc.) printer 154b; and an inserter 156, such as the 8 Series™ inserting system; all available from Pitney Bowes of Stamford, Connecticut. Still other examples of

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messaging systems are shipping and logistics systems (not shown), addressing systems, such as the AddressRight™ system available from Pitney Bowes of Stamford, Connecticut, electronic mail (not shown) and the like. Because messaging systems are well known know, the there descriptions have been limited for the sake of brevity to only that which is necessary to provide suitable background for an understanding of the present invention.

On page 5, beginning on line 13, please replace the last paragraph continuing to page 6 as follows:

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Referring to Fig. 2, in view of the structures of Fig. 1, a sender profile template 200 describing a sender (not shown) that operates a messaging system 150 to process messages intended for a recipient (not shown) is shown. The administrative agency establishes a sender profile 200 for each sender (owner, operator, etc.) utilizing a single messaging system 150 or a group of messaging systems 150. The sender profile 200 may be established at any convenient time, such as installation of the first messaging system 150 from the administrative agency. The sender profile 200 may be stored in the data center 110 in a sender profiles database 112 and includes sender account identification data 202, sender name data 204, sender address data 206, sender classification data 208 and sender transaction data 210. The sender identification data 202 may be an account name, account number or any identifying information that differentiates one message sender from another. The sender name data 204 includes information about the entity's name that is using the messaging system 150. The sender address data 206 includes information about a physical or e-mail address for billing and/or other contact purposes. The sender classification data 208 includes information about what type of industry segment best describes the sender's activities. This may be commercial, residential or some combination of both. One system for available for use with respect to the sender classification data 208 is the Standard Industry Code (SIC) system that assigns SIC

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numbers for a variety of well known industry segments. As examples, automobile rental companies would be assigned a SIC number in the range of 2100 to 2199, while automobile dealerships would be assigned a SIC number in the range of 2400-2499 and service stations would be assigned a SIC number in the range of 4000 to 4099. Still other SIC numbers exist for financial institutions, health care providers, legal service providers, professional associations, utility service providers, governmental agencies and a variety of other industry segments. The sender transaction data 210 includes information collected by the sender's messaging system 150 related to the various messages that have been processed by the sender's messaging system 150. In the preferred embodiment, a transaction record (not shown) will be created for each message that includes all the information available concerning the processing (creation, addressing, output generation, delivery, etc.) of the message.

On page 7, beginning on line 18, please replace the last paragraph continuing to page 8 as follows:

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At 402, the transaction routine 400 commences when a messaging system 150 begins to process a message. As described above, depending on the type of messaging system 150 being employed, the message processing may involve a variety of functions. Next, at 404, a transaction record (not shown) is generated that reflects the all information available concerning the processing (creation, addressing, output generation, delivery, etc.) of the message. Here again, depending on the type of messaging system 150 being employed, the transaction record may include a variety of different information. For example, a transaction from a postage metering system 154 may include: date, sender, recipient name, recipient address, postage amount, special services (insurance, return receipt request, etc.) and the like. Those skilled in the art will now appreciate that the transaction record may contain as much information as is if available from the messaging system 150. Next, at 406, the

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transaction record is associated with the sender by storing it in the transaction data 210 for a particular sender profile 200 corresponding to the sender. Depending on the type of messaging system 150, the storage of the transaction record into the transaction data 210 may occur as part of the messaging process if the messaging system 150 is in communication with the data center 110 or occur during a subsequent communication session between the messaging system 150 and the data center 110. Those skilled in the art will now appreciate that over a period of time the transaction data 210 contains a log of transaction records associated with the various messages processed by the senders' various messaging systems 150. Furthermore, a plurality of sender profiles 200 are eventually established at the data center 110 where each sender profile 200 contain respective transaction data 210 indicative of its message processing activities.

On page 10, beginning on line 23, please replace the last paragraph continuing to page 11 as follows:

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Inferences may also be drawn as to the recipient's messaging preferences. Generally, a recipient's messaging preferences may include: desired type of message (physical mail, e-mail, etc.) and frequency of receipt of recurring messages. To provide demonstrative illustrations, a discussion of the preferences identified above will be provided. A recipient that receives all messages in physical form is more likely to prefer ~~preference~~ physical messages than a recipient that receives ~~receive~~ a large percentage of messages in electronic form. Recurring messages, such as statements, from a various senders that are all received on a monthly basis may indicate a preference for monthly updates as opposed to quarterly or annual updates. Those skilled in the art will recognize that still other opportunities to draw inferences exist.

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On page 11, beginning on line 15, please replace the second full paragraph as follows:

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Once the inferences have been drawn, the recipient profile 300 is updated by storing the inferences in the inference data 308. In this manner, the searching and analyzing of transaction records need not be performed each time information is sought about the recipient. However, the searches ~~searched~~ should be conducted periodically to ensure that the no changes have occurred and the inferences are still valid.

On page 11, beginning on line 29, please replace the last paragraph continuing to page 12 as follows:

A7
Many features of the preferred embodiment represent design choices selected to best exploit the inventive concept as implemented in a particular messaging environment as pertaining to individual private recipients. However, those skilled in the art will recognize that various modifications can be made without departing from the spirit of the present invention to adapt the concepts of the present invention to address situations where the recipient is a business. For example, a wide variety of database management tools exist that can facilitate the collection of the transaction records and the generation of the recipient profiles. The exact manner in which these activities occur is subject to great variation due to practical design choices of the hardware, software, communications and data involved. As another example, the recipient profiles 300 need not be generated in response to a request for information about a particular recipient. Alternatively, a recipient profile 300 could be generated at any predetermined event, such as: automatically for each recipient or after a recipient has ~~have~~ received a given number of messages.
